SERIOUSLY, WHO WOULD READ THIS?

by

MEENALAND

Introduction

I never liked reading books — they always bored me. But here I am, writing one. Life's funny like that.

Everything you're about to read is my past. Some of it still affects me today, shaping how I think, how I love, and how I survive. But at least I can say I learned something from every stupid, funny, painful, and random thing I've done. Maybe I didn't always realise it in the moment, but those lessons were there, waiting for me to grow into them.

Thanks to destiny for giving me the chance to grow in a country I never even dreamed I'd end up in. I don't believe in coincidences. I believe things happen the way they're meant to. The outcome might look different if you choose to turn left instead of right, but sooner or later you realise you did walk the path you were supposed to. Even when life felt hard, it gave me lessons I wouldn't trade — because without them, I wouldn't be who I am today.

And honestly? If I could go back in time, I wouldn't change a thing. Every wrong turn, every heartbreak, every dumb decision — it all makes this story uniquely mine. So here I am, telling it to whoever decided to read this nonsense about me.

Seriously, who would read this? I still don't know. But if you made it here, congrats — you're already my favourite reader.

Contents

Chapter 1 Who the f*ck am I	Page 4
Chapter 2 Dump Kid, Big Drama	Page 6
Chapter 3 So, They Really Sent Me Away	Page 10
Chapter 4 Study? I Thought You Said Party	Page 14
Chapter 5 Another Country, Another Crisis	Page 17
Chapter 6 Currently Loading: My Life	Page 21

Chapter 1 – Who the f*ck am I?

Of course, I don't remember anything from when I was a baby. All I know is I was born into a warm family: Mum, Dad, and an older sister. By the time I started to actually remember things, my parents were already busy running their business, so most of the time it was my grandparents on my mum's side who raised me. We weren't poor, but we weren't rich either. My grandparents always taught me to be careful with money. Sometimes she'd just hand me sticky rice with salt to eat. I didn't blame her though — everyone in the family said I was a picky eater anyway. Fried rice, bananas, oranges, and of course 7/11 snacks — that's all I wanted.

My sister and I are twelve years apart. She always helped my parents with the business, while I was the spoiled youngest daughter. When I started primary school, my mum put me in the English Program. That meant most of my subjects were taught in English, apart from Thai and Thai culture. She also sent me to extra classes outside of school — violin, taekwondo, art, computer, maths, you name it. But honestly, I never lasted long. I got bored easily. I wasn't really good at any of them. If I could turn back time, I'd focus more, because I had more opportunities than my sister ever did.

One thing I hated though — my Thai teacher told me I shouldn't have friends outside the English Program. Our building was separate from the normal classes, so she didn't want me hanging out with them. But honestly, I didn't care. To me, we're all the same human beings. I made plenty of friends in the normal classes and hung out with them after school. Some kids in my own class didn't agree with me — maybe because their parents or teachers told them not to. Whatever.

I even had my first "lover" in Grade Five. Yeah, he was just a normal-class kid. He once gave me a buffalo plushie. My Thai teacher saw it, and I got in trouble. She told me again not to hang out with kids from the normal class. Did I listen? Of course not. The relationship didn't last long anyway. Later, another kid gave me roses on Valentine's Day. First time in my life someone gave me flowers. Cute, right? Until I grew up and found out he was also talking to my best friend the whole time. Typical. Even now, when he has a partner, he still talks to other girls. Not my problem anymore.

When I was eleven, my sister gave birth to her first son. That made me an aunty at a ridiculously young age. It felt more like I had a little brother than a nephew. A year later she had another son. Suddenly, our family of five turned into seven.

Me and my sister also got a chance to travel to Japan together on a five-day tour. I don't remember much, but I do remember Mount Fuji and lots of temples.

Grade Six was all about a Thai movie called *A Little Thing Called Love*. I begged my mum to let me cut bangs like the girl in the movie. Big mistake. The hairdresser cut them so thick I hated them. I ended up clipping them up every day. But when I grew older, I tried again, cut them thinner — now I actually love my bangs.

"Looking back, I was just a kid trying to figure out who I was in the middle of family chaos and school drama. But trust me, the real chaos started when I entered high school."

Chapter 2 – Dump Kid, Big Drama

Stepping into high school felt like a new chapter. This time I was in a normal class — English Program was too expensive, and honestly, my mum already realised I wasn't exactly a smart kid. I didn't mind. Most of my old primary school friends were still around anyway.

After a month or two, one of my friends dragged me into the school marching band. At first, I thought I'd get to play an instrument. Nope. I was a colour guard. If you don't know what that is, it's basically kids waving flags at the front of the parade, acting like we're the main characters.

Sports Day became my stage. Endless practice after school, sometimes even weekends. I loved it. Especially when we joined other schools' parades. More events meant more excuses to ditch class. And nothing felt better than skipping class without getting in trouble.

The only problem? My family was always too busy with business to watch me perform. My mum would just send one of her workers to take photos. I learned to go to school by myself. My dad wasn't the type to show love, but me and my sister could feel it in his own way.

Love & Crushes

My first crush was a boy in the homeroom next to mine. I even snuck a look at his timetable just to see when I might "accidentally" bump into him. Luckily, he was also in the marching band, as a drummer. But no matter how hard I tried, his heart was already set on a girl in his class. Today, we're best friends. He has a wife and a son now — not with that girl, by the way.

I had plenty of crushes but never felt pretty enough. So, while I liked other people, I never dated anyone from my own school. Still, one memory sticks. There was a boy I liked in my class, and one of his friends once asked me, "What do I have to do to make you stop liking him? Should I pray for it?" I was stunned. I cried that day.

That night, I told my mum I wanted braces. My bottom teeth overlapped my top teeth, and every dentist had warned me: "Get braces now, or you'll need jaw surgery later." I never cared before. But after that humiliation, I wanted to change how I looked. I went to salons with my mum every week, trying to look better for myself — and, yes, for him. In the end, he didn't like me back, and I moved on.

Later, I dated a guy from another school. I thought I was finally happy. Until I found out he was cheating on me. Classic.

Trouble & Secrets

My sister's husband had a Honda Gorilla, the cutest little motorbike. One day, when no one was home, I stole it. Drove to my friend's house, then to school just to show off. I had no idea how to ride, but somehow, I managed — nearly crashing into a car on the way back. I returned before anyone knew. No one ever found out. Until now.

There was one time I accidentally broke my friend's phone. Instead of asking my mum for help, I secretly sold my iPad to pay for the repair. My mum never even asked where the iPad went. I should've told her, but I didn't.

Since my house was close to school, friends often came over. My mum always spoiled us with food, while my sister complained I didn't focus on studying. Most weekends, I had someone sleeping over. But my family never let me sleep at anyone else's house. If there were going to be sleepovers, it had to be at ours.

*Weird and Scary Sh*t*

Then came the three-day school scout camp. Everyone said it was haunted. At camp, one night, my mum dropped off snacks for me. My name got called on the loudspeaker — "Your mum's here with snacks." Embarrassing as hell. But it was also kind of sweet.

Everything seemed fine, until I came home. Suddenly, my body burned with fever. No warning. I went from clinic to hospital, couldn't walk, passed out. I woke up days later, holy threads tied on my arms, a Buddhist amulet around my neck.

Doctors said it was just a high fever. My family said otherwise. My sister told me my skin had turned dark, I spoke in some strange language, and laughed like I wasn't myself. Honestly, I remember nothing. But they do. And it freaked them out.

The Twist

By 2015, at a Christmas dinner with the local community, I was bored out of my mind. Everyone there was my parents' age. I wanted to leave and see my friends, but my mum wouldn't let me.

That night, one of my mum's friends said she was sending her own kids to study in New Zealand, then turned to my mum and asked if she wanted to send me too. I laughed and said, "Yeah, if you dare to send me, then do it." I thought it was just a joke. No way my mum would actually send me — I was her youngest.

Turns out, I was wrong. My grades were bad, my parents were tired of me, maybe both. New Year came, and my documents were ready. Passport done. One month later, I had to say goodbye to my friends. February, my feet already touched New Zealand soil. Like, are you kidding me?

"One minute I was waving flags in a school Parade, the next I was waving goodbye to my whole life."

Chapter 3 – So, They Really Sent Me Away

Looking out of the plane window, all I could see were clouds, mountains, and endless green. *Where* the f*ck am I? I had just landed in South New Zealand. A teacher from the school was waiting, along with the host families who'd take us home. I'd only seen their photos a week before I flew.

I wasn't alone. My mum's friend had sent her kids too — Tar (a year older) and Kitty (a year younger). The three of us ended up in different host families. Mine was an elderly couple. Honestly, I had no idea what they were saying. I'd studied English for years, but when it came to actual native speakers, I was blank. My translator app became my best friend.

Lost in Translation

I started as a Year 10 student with zero clue what people were saying in class. Every new international student got a "buddy," but sadly, my first buddy ditched me, telling the teacher she didn't want to look after me. I was changed three times. It hurt. Made me wonder — am I really that unwanted?

Cooking class was the worst. No one wanted to partner with me. I went only three times before hiding in the toilet instead. Eventually, the international department switched me into Japanese class. That saved me. I found friends there, and somehow, I even topped the class once.

Slowly, my English improved. I had no choice. And funny enough, even with broken English, I still ended up with a boyfriend in my first year of high school in New Zealand.

Puppy Love

At our school there were more Thai kids than I expected — ten of us. We had an international room to eat and hang out at lunch, and sometimes we'd bring other students too.

That's how I met Tony, a green-eyed kid from the UK. My dream country had always been the UK, so of course I thought he was cute. He thought the same about me, and within a week he asked me out. But with my English so bad, it was awkward as hell. Two weeks later, it was over. I barely count it.

Then came Jacob. I met him in Japanese class through a friend. Tall, blue eyes, kind of popular. I told my friend I had a crush, and suddenly I was always seated next to him. One day he asked, "Would you like to go out with me?" I thought he meant hang out. I answered, "When and where?" He teased me about that forever.

He was my first kiss. I was his first kiss. Looking back, it was just teenage love, but even now it makes me smile.

But distance ruined us. I'd fly back to Thailand for school breaks, and we'd FaceTime as much as we could. Then one day, as me and Kitty were sitting at the airport waiting to board our flight back to New Zealand, he broke up with me — just because I got upset about him adding another girl on Facebook. I was fifteen, crying at the gate, missing the flight completely. That day is burned into my memory forever.

We got back together once, but it didn't last. His friends mocked him for dating me. Eventually, he dated the girl he swore was "just a friend." After that, we barely spoke. Years later he'd show up at a party at my place, drunk-text me sometimes, even now.

Not Quite Love

After Jacob, I got close to another guy from a different school. We did everything couples do but never officially dated. Years later, in Year 13, we tried being together properly. He was popular, in the rugby team, with plenty of girls around. I'd be there cheering him on.

But the arguments broke us. He wanted things the way they were — close, but without labels. After four months, we ended it. It hurt the most because he was someone I'd known for years.

The Darker Side

Back in Year 11, after Jacob, I joined a dating site. A guy messaged me — turns out he was a friend of a friend. He told me about his struggles, about being in youth court, about wanting to hurt himself. At first, I was just being a friend. But soon, I found myself pulled into his world. He'd send me photos of what he'd done to himself. I didn't know how to handle it, so I started doing the same, almost as if copying him would stop him. That's when I realised — I'd gotten trapped in it too.

With another guy I mentioned earlier, the "almost-boyfriend," sometimes our fights turned physical. That only pushed me deeper into the spiral.

By my last year of high school, the depression was heavy. I nearly didn't make it through. If my host family hadn't found me when they did, I might not be here. I saw the school counsellor, and they warned me: if I didn't get help, I'd be sent back home. After graduation, I finally started medication. Lexapro became my "new best friend."

Silver Linings

But it wasn't all bad. I loved the trips — skiing, visiting the North Island, even just eating Jimmy's Pies. I liked the senior uniform too. And once, I even met Jacinda Ardern, before she became Prime Minister. Got a photo with her and everything.

Somehow, in Year 12, I even ended up as the captain of the school handball team. Don't ask me how — I sucked at it. But hey, I got the title, and that's what counts, right?

And then there were the annual international student camps. Sounds fun, right? Well, yes and no. The places were always in the bush or on some random island. Cool views, sure. But the toilets? Oh my god. It wasn't even a real toilet — just a plastic seat with a hole in the ground. That image is burned into my brain forever.

I also had small wins that meant a lot to me. Like being top of my Japanese class once, even though my English was still broken. Or the first time I could order food without using my translator app. Or making friends who didn't care that I was the "international kid."

There were weekends when my host family would take me to the beach, or when I'd sit outside and just breathe in air that felt nothing like Bangkok's. I remember my first snow day — throwing snowballs like a little kid, even though I was supposed to be a "teenager" by then.

Looking back, New Zealand wasn't just heartbreaks and dark days. It was also freedom, first experiences, and proof that even if life threw me into a place I didn't understand, I could still find pieces of joy.

"Depression was real. But so was the snow, the laughter, the handball captain title I didn't deserve, and the kid who refused to give up."

Chapter 4 – Study? I Thought You Said Party

After graduating high school, I didn't return home that year. Instead, I stayed in New Zealand to figure out what I was going to study — and, more importantly, where I was going to live. Me and another Thai girl found a flat with seven bedrooms, which meant we needed five more people. Nothing like starting adult life with a roommate lottery.

Even though I didn't fly back to Thailand, my mum sent my sister to visit me for a week. Naturally, I threw her a party at the flat. (To be fair, that party is what made everyone in the flat start bonding with each other.) We also went to Queenstown together, hit the bars, and when she left, it felt weirdly empty. So, what did I do? Threw more parties. Almost every weekend. Sometimes weekdays too. Why not?

Polytechnic & Pandemic

February rolled around, and I started my course at the polytechnic. Guess who I bumped into? Tony. Yep, the two-week boyfriend with green eyes from high school. Small world. Our class only had ten people, and somehow, I got chosen as class rep. Thanks, I guess? It meant attending boring meetings sometimes. That's it.

It was 2020, and for my birthday I threw a massive party at the flat — flatmates, friends, friends of friends, and even randoms who probably didn't know my name. The best part? I threw it two days before my actual birthday. Because on the real day… lockdown hit. Happy freakin' birthday to me.

The Thai girl moved back to her partner in another city, so it was just six of us left in the flat. Lockdown life meant endless board games, karaoke, drinking, and doing literally anything to stay sane. Supermarkets were still open, but that was about it. One week, we even ran out of gas. No hot water. Middle of winter. We called the supplier, but delays left us stuck with freezing showers. My genius solution? Boil water in a giant pot and shower with that. Primitive, but effective.

One boring afternoon, I downloaded a dating app and matched with a guy from Australia. We talked, FaceTimed, and he even sent me gifts every month for our "anniversary." Yep — I managed to land myself in a long-distance relationship during lockdown. Because why not add more chaos to the mix?

First Jobs

After lockdown lifted, I volunteered at a Thai culture event at the university. That's how I met more Thai people in town. One Thai lady was opening a food court near my old high school and needed someone to wear a mascot costume to hand out cotton candy and popcorn. I said, sure, why not. It was fun — and surprise, I even got paid for it. That became my first job: food court staff.

I sold drinks, milkshakes, ice cream, desserts — basically anything that kept kids sugared up. Sometimes the owner sent me to cover her other shops too: burgers, poke bowls, whatever needed hands. Later, another Thai guy asked if I could help at his restaurant while one of his staff was on maternity leave. But I had to keep it quiet, because he and the food court owner hated each other. Congrats to me: double life unlocked.

Then one day, I was working at the Thai restaurant when the phone rang. It was a translation company asking if I knew any Thai people who could interpret. I said, "Not really… but I could do it if you want?" And just like that, I stumbled into my first freelance gig as an interpreter.

Blind Love

A year went by — first anniversary with the Aussie guy. The border finally opened between New Zealand and Australia, and he booked a flight to see me. Imagine dating someone you'd only ever seen on a screen. Meeting him in real life actually went well. Too well. So well that I decided to move to Australia to be with him. Blind love, baby.

Saying goodbye to New Zealand was harder than I thought. It had become my second home — the place that gave me heartbreaks, depression, random jobs, independence, and survival hacks like "boiled-water showers." But I left it all behind for love.

When I landed in Australia, I found out my flight was the last one before the border closed again. Perfect timing or dumb luck — still can't decide.

"Turns out maybe I wasn't on the wrong course after all. Maybe the real subject was just… learning life."

Chapter 5 – Another Country, Another Crisis

Hello, Melbourne. My new home? I got picked up in a blue BMW. My favourite colour. Nice start, right? We drove to his dad's house — that's where he was living, with his dad, step-mum, two cats, and a dog. They said the dog hated strangers. But when I met him, he wagged his tail and decided we were besties on the spot.

Still, the question hit me: Did I really move to a whole new country for a guy? Yeah. I did. Blind love.

Lockdown made things simple: nothing to do except online study. I came on a student visa for a patisserie course, but honestly? It could've been basket weaving and I wouldn't have cared. The point wasn't the course. The point was being here with him.

Weeks passed, and I started job hunting so I could stop asking my family for money. My first gig was retail. Casual hours. Not enough. When classes resumed, I quit and found a job at a Japanese restaurant near his dad's house.

My schedule went insane: mornings in class, evenings in the restaurant, every day. But I liked it. Made friends from both. Six months later, the owner asked me to step up as restaurant manager — his son was too busy with uni. I said yes. Experience is experience.

I finished my one-year course just as my partner bought an apartment in the city. Perfect timing. I landed a job at a restaurant I'd once visited for my 21st birthday. Back then I told myself, "One day, I want to work here." And somehow, I did.

Cracks in the Foundation

I climbed from F&B attendant to higher duties, filling in for management whenever needed. Work life felt steady. Relationship life felt… okay. Road trips, living together, normal couple stuff. But for me, moving in together meant more. I was saving for a partner visa, paying rent every month, talking about marriage. His response was always the same: "We're already like a married couple. No rush." Fine. I let it go. Focused on work.

I stayed at that restaurant nearly two years before it shut down out of nowhere. No reason given. Just gone. But the memories there? Gold. Best team I ever had. Then came job hunting again: five interviews, three offers, and I picked F&B Supervisor at a new hotel.

People sometimes ask why I didn't become a chef after studying patisserie. Truth? Every kitchen job wanted "experience," not just school. Like, how do you get experience if no one hires you? So, I leaned into what I was already good at — customer service and leadership. I still baked on the side. Cookies, cupcakes, whatever. Whenever people at work complimented me, it felt like a little win.

And then came the part I don't really want to talk about.

Breaking Point

We moved into the apartment, just me and him. I paid rent, he paid bills. Technically, I was paying his mortgage — under his name only, because of my visa. I didn't see it as a red flag, but others did. Immigration emailed me: I was eligible for permanent residency. I was thrilled. Started gathering documents. But I needed some from him. His response?
"Why are you rushing? Are you going to leave me once you get PR?"

I'd never even thought that. All I wanted was a future. He only saw suspicion. I let it slide. Again.

Then came the tattoo fight. My first tattoo, hand-poked by a friend. I didn't tell him. When he found out, he exploded. The words he said, I'll never forget: "I need to reconsider your visa."

That broke me. I stayed at a friend's house. He apologised later, saying he was just scared I'd leave. I gave him another chance. But it was never the same.

Money was another crack. When the restaurant closed, I got redundancy pay. He asked for 70% of it. Even his mum didn't agree. He called it "investment money." I gave in. Because love makes you stupid. Later, when I asked for it back, he said, "Sue me."

That was the day my feelings really died. He tried to fix things — couple's therapy, endless late-night talks when all I wanted was sleep. But I was done.

One day, I packed my things. His mum and dad were there. His mum — someone I'd been close to — said words I'll never forget: "We gave you everything, and you're doing this to us. I hope your next love will be sh*t."

I laughed and cried at the same time. My partner? He hid under the blanket. Didn't even defend me. That was it.

I left. The apartment, the visa, the four-year relationship, the career I built, and even my Care Bears collection.

I got the 70% back, but not the rent money, not the years, not the love. I withdrew my visa application myself, because I was tired of him holding it over me like a weapon.

And here's the truth: if only one person is trying, it's already over.

"I didn't just lose a boyfriend. I lost years of my life, the career I built, and even my Care Bears. But the one thing I refused to lose was myself."

Chapter 6 – Currently Loading: My Life

I booked a flight back to my home country. This time, I knew I'd be staying a while — even if one day I'd come back again. By the way, not long after breaking up with the guy I'd been with for four years, I met my current partner. People might say I moved on too fast, but honestly? I think I started moving on the moment my feelings for my ex weren't the same anymore.

My current partner is from Queensland, originally Thai, but he grew up in Australia with his mum. He understood me in ways no one else did. Maybe it's because he's also Thai, maybe it's just his personality. He was mature, thoughtful, and gave me things I'd never had to ask or beg for.

Back in Thailand, I went to my hometown first to spend time with my family. A month later, I moved to Bangkok and stayed with a friend from my Thai high school. It felt… different. Not like starting over in New Zealand, not like Australia either. Hard to explain, but it didn't feel the same.

I applied for a lot of jobs. I already knew the truth: in Thailand, without a bachelor's degree, no matter how much experience you have, most companies won't even look at you. It was tough. Still, there were a few who saw value in me and gave me a chance. In the meantime, I worked casual jobs — handing out flyers, interpreting, receptionist gigs, function staff, and more.

Eventually, I landed a full-time job as an assistant pastry chef. Surprise, right? Same here. The company was owned by foreigners. I'd actually applied to be a waitress, but during the interview they noticed my Certificate in Patisserie and said, "Why don't I give you a chance to work in the kitchen?" And just like that, I suddenly found myself doing the thing I'd always wanted to try but never had the chance to. Guess my certificate finally paid rent.

Restarting wasn't easy, but at least I finally got to work in pastry — something I'd dreamed of. I don't know if I'll be great at it, but I believe in myself. I've been through worse. At least now I get to try.

Fun fact: my partner's mum got a new puppy. Later, she found out the puppy has the exact same birthday as me. Coincidence? Or a sign? Who knows. We're in a long-distance relationship now, saving money together for the future, while both focusing on our careers. We'll see each other again soon.

Of course, my past love still affects me sometimes, but my current partner understands. He never judges. Thanks to him for staying by my side. I just have to remember: new love doesn't have to be like old love.

Wish me luck with my future. I'm trying to be better every day. And I hope everything goes well for you too — whether I know you or not.

"The past shaped me, the present tests me, and the future? Well, that part's still being written. I don't know where this road goes, but at least now I know I can walk it." – Meenaland.